



## Overview: Proposed Surry-Skiffes Creek Power Line Project over the James River in Virginia's Historic Triangle

# Project Overview

Dominion Virginia Power proposes to construct a new 7.76 mile, 500kV aerial transmission line from Surry (VA) nuclear power plant, crossing the James River east of Jamestown Island, to a proposed Skiffes Creek switching station. The power line would make a 4.1 mile crossing of the James River, requiring placement of 17 towers (up to 295' high) and related infrastructure within and above the river bed. It would also heighten another 27 land-based towers in the immediate area.

The project requires a federal permit to cross a navigable waterway. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is the federal permitting agency and responsible for ensuring compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act (known as Section 106) and National Environmental Policy Act.

# Jamestown Island Area Historic Properties



# Historic Properties At Risk

- Colonial National Historical Park
  - Historic Jamestowne and Jamestown Island
  - Colonial Parkway
- Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail and associated 81,251 acre NRHP eligible historic district
- Carter's Grove Plantation National Historic Landmark
- NRHP listed ABBP sites: Fort Huger, Fort Boykin and Fort Crafford





***View from Black Point, Jamestown Island, Colonial National Historical Park***





*View toward Hog Island from along Colonial Parkway near College Creek*

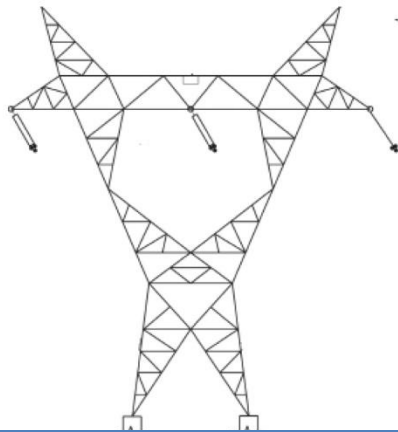


*Carter's Grove Plantation National Historic Landmark on James River*

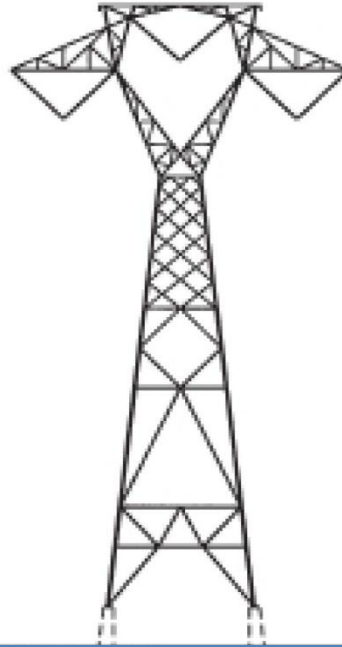


# 17 Proposed In-water Towers

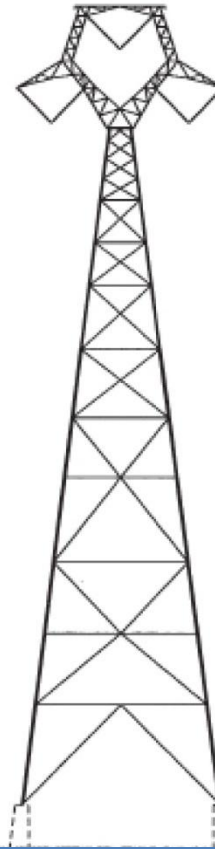
(tallest: 295 feet high)



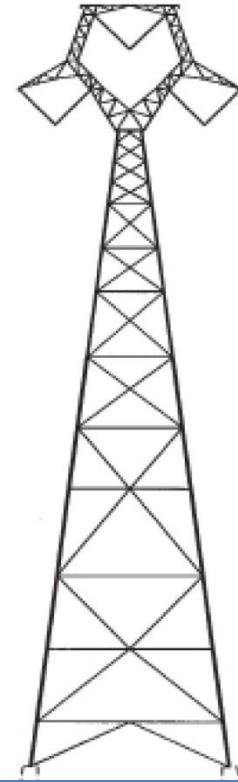
**3 Towers**



**10 Towers**



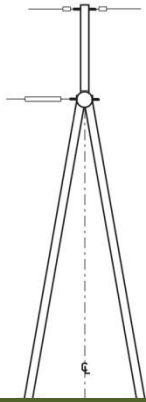
**2 Towers**



**2 Towers**



# 27 Land Towers (average height 115 feet)



**2 Towers**



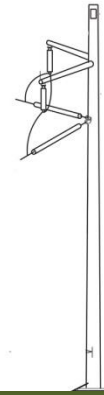
**1 Tower**



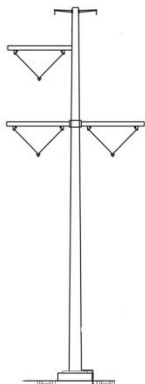
**1 Tower**



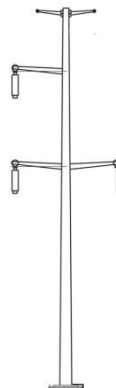
**8 Towers**



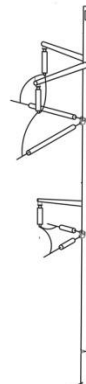
**3 Towers**



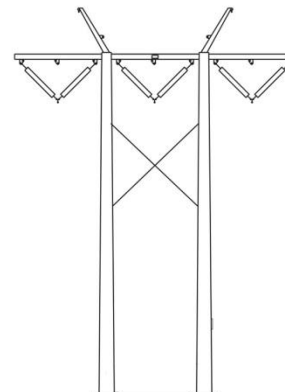
**7 Towers**



**3 Towers**



**1 Tower**

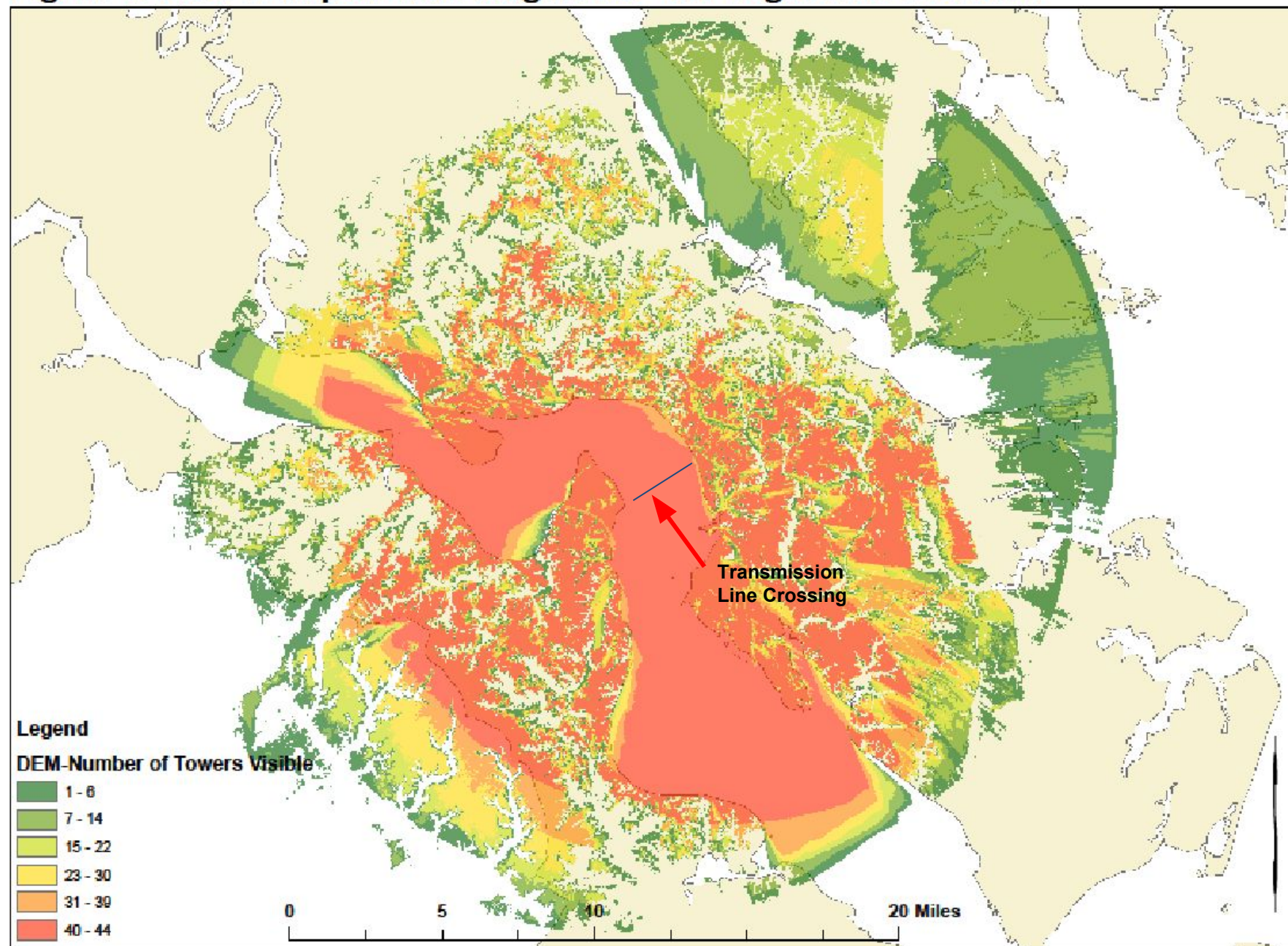


**8 Towers**

# Extent of Visual Impacts

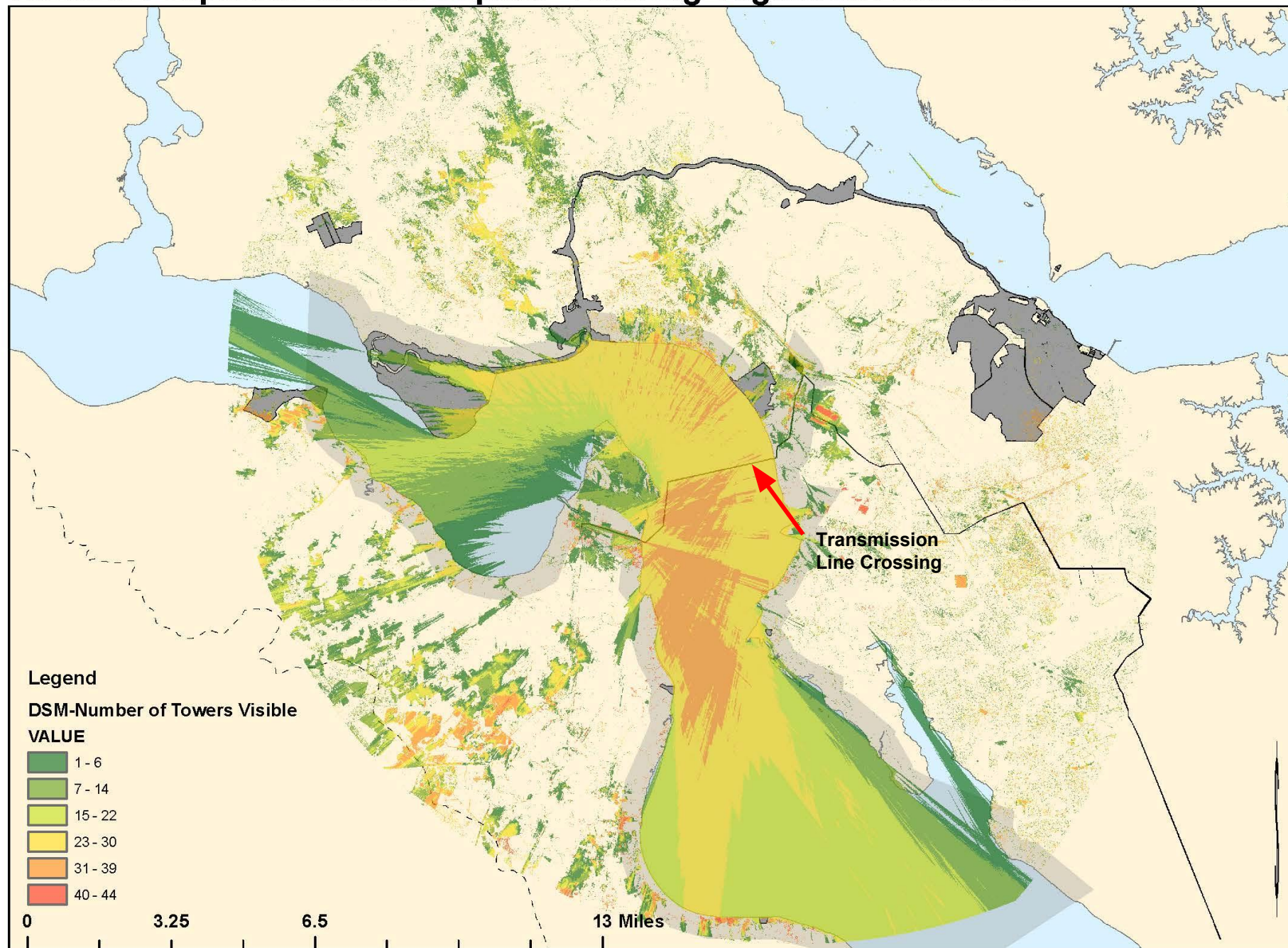
The National Park Service conducted a visual analysis of the potential impacts of the proposed transmission line and towers. The two maps on the following slides show the extent to which the line and towers would be visible and the historic properties they would impact. These depict two different scenarios: the first assuming no vegetation is screening the view, and the second with existing vegetation. The actual impact would likely be somewhere between the two, as: (1) screening vegetation is not all permanently protected; (2) vegetation is highly subject to alteration from storm damage, insect infestations due to climate change, and invasive species; and (3) changing sea levels. No vegetation is unlikely, but some loss of existing vegetation is quite likely. The colors on the maps indicate the number of towers visible from a location, from 0 (no added shade) to 44 (red).

**Figure 5: Area of Impact with Magnitude - No Vegetation Scenario**





# Historic Properties area of impact - Existing Vegetation Scenario



# Status of Project

## Section 106 (National Historic Preservation Act) Process

### Assessment of Effects:

- USACE released an assessment of effects on historic resources in October 2015. In November NPS and other interested parties provided numerous comments pointing out that the assessment was not complete and that it understated impacts to the area's historic resources. In January 2016 NPS outlined major short-comings in a Dominion prepared response to consulting party comments on the Cultural Resources Effects Assessment.

# Status of Project

## Section 106 (National Historic Preservation Act) Process

### Resolution of Effects:

- On December 10 2015, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (the organization that oversees compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act) advised USACE of the need to address NPS and other parties' concerns about the assessment of effects before proceeding to discuss any possible mitigation.
- On December 29 2015, the USACE released a draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) prepared by Dominion Virginia Power proposing mitigation actions for the project. NPS has since issued a series of letters reiterating requests for additional analysis of impacts, consideration of alternatives, and preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement.



# Status of Project

## Section 106 (National Historic Preservation Act) Process

### Resolution of Effects (continued):

- On March 3 2016, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation forwarded a letter to the USACE reiterating their concerns about the Corps Section 106 process to date—noting deficiencies in the view shed analysis, cumulative impact analysis and noting that an EIS would be the best instrument to complete the overall analysis.
- On June 13 2016, the USACE released a revised draft MOA prepared by Dominion Virginia Power and requested comments on the document by July 15 2016.

# Status of Project

## NEPA Process

- USACE has indicated they plan to follow the NEPA process for the project - completing an environmental assessment (EA) to inform a decision of whether to: (a) issue a “finding of no significant impact” (FONSI) with documentation that impacts can/will be mitigated; (b) deny a permit for the project based on its impact to public resources; or (c) proceed with an “environmental impact statement” to examine impacts and alternatives in greater detail. USACE has noted that no decision has yet been made on these options.

# Status of Project

## NPS Position

- It is not acceptable to forever degrade, damage and destroy the historic setting of iconic resources designated by Congress to ensure their permanent protection.
- NPS urges the USACE to deny the permit for the proposed overhead line and to encourage Dominion Virginia Power to further examine the many other solutions available that do not impair this nation's natural, cultural, and historic resources.